



82D AIRBORNE DIVISION

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM NEWSLETTER



Dear All American Families,

Task Force All American troopers perform superbly our mission here with tremendous dedication and professionalism. Every day, we see progress across the full spectrum of security, governmental, and economic functions, as well as essential services through our direct interaction with civic and community leaders, business professionals, and the Iraqi populace. We are making a real difference in the quality of lives and the future of the Iraqi people. Simply stated - - we have provided the opportunity for freedom to flourish in a formerly oppressed land.

Our efforts in Iraq have a direct relationship with the continued safety and security of our Nation. What we do here will ensure a bright future filled with opportunity and safety not only for ourselves, but for our children and our children's children. As you may have read in the papers, we have had recent success capturing Al Qaeda members and former regime leaders which demonstrate once again how critical it is to bring a stable and secure environment to this volatile region of the world. With that objective in mind, we begin and end each day knowing that what we do is important to current and future generations of Americans and is worth our best effort everyday.

As Task Force Falcon returns home after completing their historic participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom, it is important to note their remarkable accomplishments. Task Force Falcon performed superbly for over a year under incredibly austere conditions in one of Iraq's most contentious regions. Task Force Falcon's relentless pursuit of the enemy and dedication to improving the lives of Iraqis in their area of operations will stand as an example for others to emulate. The impact of Task Force Falcon's efforts to improve the quality of life for Iraqis and to afford the fledgling democratic government to flourish can already be seen and more importantly experienced by the Iraqis.

Task Force Devil, recently returned from their successful participation in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, has already begun to make their mark in Iraq by taking the fight to former regime elements bent on impeding the transformation of a free and democratic Iraq. While not operating directly with Task Force All American, we will ensure we share our lessons learned with our fellow paratroopers that they are provided everything necessary to ensure their safety and success.





And said another way - - please do not mail any item to any trooper that has an APO of 09384 after February 20, 2004.

It is very important to remember during this period of turbulence, with units deploying and returning simultaneously, that your family readiness group and unit rear detachment commanders remain the most consistent and accurate source of information on the status of your loved one. Your family readiness group and rear detachment commander are fully capable of assisting you with issues that arise during this deployment. Fort Bragg is fully engaged in assuring that the loved ones of paratroopers are taken care of during this deployment and your rear unit detachment commanders were selected based upon their experience and ability to tap into all of Fort Bragg's systems. If you have a question or concern I'd suggest that you contact your family readiness group representative or rear detachment commander because it is likely they know how to make Fort Bragg's systems work for you.

I will close this month's edition of the newsletter by thanking you for all that you have done and continue to do for the paratroopers of this Division. We have made a real difference in the lives of Iraqis within the Al Anbar province and I am confident that our efforts in Iraq will ensure the safety and security of America. Your personal contribution supporting your trooper on the front lines of liberty and freedom truly makes a marked difference and we truly appreciate all that you do for us.

May God bless each of you.

TROOPERS FIRST, MISSION ALWAYS!

Charles H. Swannack, Jr.
Commanding General, 82nd Airborne Division



I am certain that Task Force Devil will continue the legacy of "Devils in baggy pants."

By your mail, packages, and email, we are reminded of the tremendous outpouring of support from our families and friends during our efforts here in Iraq. Distinguished National political and military leaders also express their gratitude and support for Task Force All American during their visits. And average Americans who send cards and care packages or school children who send letters and pictures to "any soldier" have demonstrated their appreciation for our efforts. Your kindness and support have been a tremendous lift to the spirits of all of our troopers of Task Force All American, but let me remind you, unless you are mailing to a 1st Brigade / Task Force Devil trooper who just deployed, you should not send mail or packages past February 20, 2004.



CSM Wolf Amacker
Command Sergeant Major
82D Airborne Division

Dear Families and Friends of the All American Division,

Airborne! Task Force All American continues to excel here in Iraq. Our paratroopers are performing superbly both in the execution of combat operations and in their efforts to make Iraq safe and secure. I could not be more proud of them.

We continue to see great successes during our combat operations - - we are taking the fight to the enemy and we have them on the run. The successful capture of numerous high-level anti-coalition personnel is making a real difference. These operations are having a direct and positive impact on our safety and on the future of Iraq.

During this period of troop movements in and out of Iraq, I have emphasized force protection and safety with our leaders. They have responded and are working everyday to improve our capabilities to accomplish our mission safely.

Everyday and on every operating base we occupy we continue improvements in the quality of life of our paratroopers. Internet kiosks, phone services, morale, welfare, and recreation tents or buildings, laundry service, and PX's are now available on most of our bases. We will continue to improve these services until the day we leave Iraq. We also continue to improve the basic services for our troopers - - semi-permanent dining facilities, showers, and latrines are in-place or under construction. Our efforts should make the day to day quality of life better for our para-

troopers and we will leave our bases in great shape for those that follow us.

We continue to impress, through action and how we carry ourselves, the numerous visitors who have come to Iraq to see the Division in action. We have in our Division, across all ranks, superb troopers and leaders who have made a lasting impression on those they have come into contact with. I have watched with great pride the professionalism displayed by our paratroopers as they describe their mission or their capabilities to visiting dignitaries without a trace of bravado. They clearly convey the message that they are ready to accomplish their mission. You should be very proud of your paratroopers; they represent our

Nation and the lineage of the All American Division with distinction.

Over the last couple of weeks we saw the 1st Brigade flow into Iraq. It's never pleasant to watch your loved one deploy, but you can be assured they are accomplishing an

important function here in Iraq. Though they don't technically work for the Division, we will keep a close eye on the rest of our airborne family and make sure they are taken care of.

Thanks for all you do everyday to support to the paratroopers of the 82D Airborne Division. Your contributions, both large and small, make a real difference to us and your support is truly appreciated. Your concern and dedication to your family, paratrooper, and your Nation is critical to the success of our mission. I am proud to be a paratrooper and to serve with the 82D Airborne Division.

All The Way!
CSM Wolf Amacker





505th PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT

Task Force Panther



Colonel Jefforey Smith
Commanding Officer, 505th PIR

Dear Panther Families,

Greetings from TF Panther in Iraq. We would like to wish an early Happy Valentine's Day greetings to all our loved ones. Our families are always in our thoughts, and we hope that you are all staying warm and safe during these winter months. We have fortunately only seen two days with below freezing temperatures in our part of Iraq and have not enjoyed any ice storms, as you have recently.

Quite a few members of the national media have visited us recently. Most notably, Ted Koppel off ABC/Nightline went out on patrol in Fallujah with 1 Panther in early January. His stories were part of a week long special aired on Nightline. Currently, we are being visited by CNN, the LA Times, and USA Today. Additionally, Kevin Mauer of the Fayetteville

Observer has returned to us and intends to stay a few weeks. We should see some good coverage on the progress that we have made in our area - to include Fallujah.

The TF Panther Team that we have forged here in this war is starting to break up. This month we will be saying farewell to two of our National Guard Engineer units: A Co 890th ENG Mississippi National Guard and C Co 122nd ENG South Carolina National Guard. Our high standard of living would not have been possible without the efforts of these two great Engineer units. Through their skills and hard work, we are unquestionably leaving our area in much better condition than we received it last August.

We continue to see improvements in our area of operations, too. Combat operations continue. Yet, we are also focusing more and more effort on Civil Military Operations. We are working with the CPA and other





sources to find funds to improve the quality of life for the local Iraqis. We continue to improve on the availability of electricity and gas so that the citizens can have better living conditions. We are fighting black marketing of gasoline and propane. We continue our work assisting with the establishment of new local governments throughout our zone. We continue to engage locals and their leaders and our reaping the benefits with improved stability in our zone.

We intend to finish strong during our final months here. Of course, the anticipation of returning to you continues to grow on our minds! We look forward to being with you soon!

H-MINUS!
COL Jefforey Smith

Recently, TF 2 Panther deployed to Iraq with 1st Brigade. Although not working for us or with us, we will keep in touch with them and ensure that we share our lessons learned with them as they begin working in this environment.



319th AIRBORNE FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT

Loyalty



Colonel Scott Thein **Commanding Officer, 319th AFAR**

Dear family and friends of the DIVARTY,

The troopers of the Regiment continue to excel as they execute the missions assigned to them. 2-319th is currently in the process of redeploying to Fort Bragg, and by the time of this publication we hope that they are nearly complete with that task. They have served proudly and made a huge contribution to the people of Iraq through their selfless service and tireless dedication. We hope they all get some much deserved rest and come back to work ready to begin the process of preparing for their next mission.

Even as we witness the return of the 2-319th troopers we continue to deploy troopers into Iraq in support of operations. The recent deployment of the 1st BCT included the FISTers from 3-319th. They are here to support operations during the transition from OIF1 forces to OIF2 units currently taking place. These troopers are expected to be here for 4 to 5 months.

The troopers of 1-319th continue to provide outstanding fire support to 3d BCT, as well as, working the Civil Affairs and Information Operations missions for the brigade. CSM Williams and I have visited them several times and not only are they doing great work for 3d BCT, but they are keeping up their morale and looking forward to returning to Fort Bragg with 3d BCT later this spring.

The Division FSE is doing an outstanding job as it continues to provide fire support to the Division Main, as well as, working as the information operations cell. Though the information operations mission is not a traditional artillery mission, the FSE troopers are meeting the challenge head on and making significant contributions to the Division's mission with this crucial facet of the U.S. led coalition campaign.

The troopers of the HHB continue to conduct the day-to-day operations of Champion Main continuing to make improvements for the troopers here and follow-on forces replacing the 82d Airborne Division in this region of Iraq.

The demolition is quite a blast!



Inspecting the crater after the blast



These improvements include ongoing upgrades to the power on Champion Main, on site laundry facility and the construction of the MWR facility that includes a gym, a movie room, game rooms and internet café.

In addition to the base operations mission the DIVARTY continues to work on the consolidation and destruction of captured ammunition. Members of the HHB are currently in the field at several cache locations conducting demolition and consolidation operations. The incredible efforts of these dedicated troopers will result in a huge reduction in ammunition caches throughout western Iraq. The projected figures originally indicated a job that would take as long as 5 years to complete. The troopers of DIVARTY along with the troopers of 21st Chemical Company, 489th Engineer Company, and 41st FA Brigade have proven that once soldiers are given a mission they complete it to the fullest. As we prepare to leave Iraq over the next couple of months, we will have completed 90% of that 5-year job, leaving the follow-on forces with a less daunting task than what DIVARTY faced upon arriving in Iraq.

The cache reduction mission was recently featured on a FOX News report by Dana Lewis that credited the DIVARTY with making such a significant contribution to the efforts of US and coalition forces.

All of our troopers are working hard to accomplish their assigned mission. At the same time we are doing everything possible to ensure the safe return of each and every paratrooper. As we prepare for the movement of our troopers we are re-emphasizing our safety procedures and the need for every trooper to not become complacent.



The DIVARTY CDR, CSM and Staff in front of DMAIN

We send our best to all of our family and friends supporting us from home. We are looking forward to getting home soon.

ALL THE WAY!

COL Scott Thein
and
CSM Michael Williams



HHB, DIVARTY with "Old Glory"



82D AVIATION BRIGADE

Task Force Pegasus



Colonel Perry Wiggins
Commanding Officer, 82D AVN BDE

Dear Families of Task Force Pegasus,

As the month of January comes to a close we in Task Force Pegasus look back with heavy hearts as we rendered final honors to three of this nation's finest paratroopers. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families and friends of CPT Kimberly Hampton, CW2 Aaron Weaver and SPC Nathaniel Johnson. The memorial services celebrated the lives of these great patriots and their service to our nation. The service further demonstrated the positive and lasting impact that these troopers had on each and every member of this task force. They will be sorely missed but they shall never be forgotten.

An integral part of the Task Force 82 team, Task

Force Pegasus, has executed 8500 flight hours in support of our ground brethren. Task Force 82 has taken the fight to the enemy and there has been a marked difference in the activities directed against coalition forces. The division is clearly advancing the ball in bringing a safe and secure environment to the Iraqi people.

We recently adopted a secondary school here in Central Iraq. The smile on the school children's face is worth the visits. Initial assessments of the facilities have been made and a contract is in the process of being let to affect the necessary repairs. A number of you have sent donations of school supplies and the principle and teachers are very appreciative. I am extremely proud of our soldiers and their ability to serve as ambassadors for our great nation.



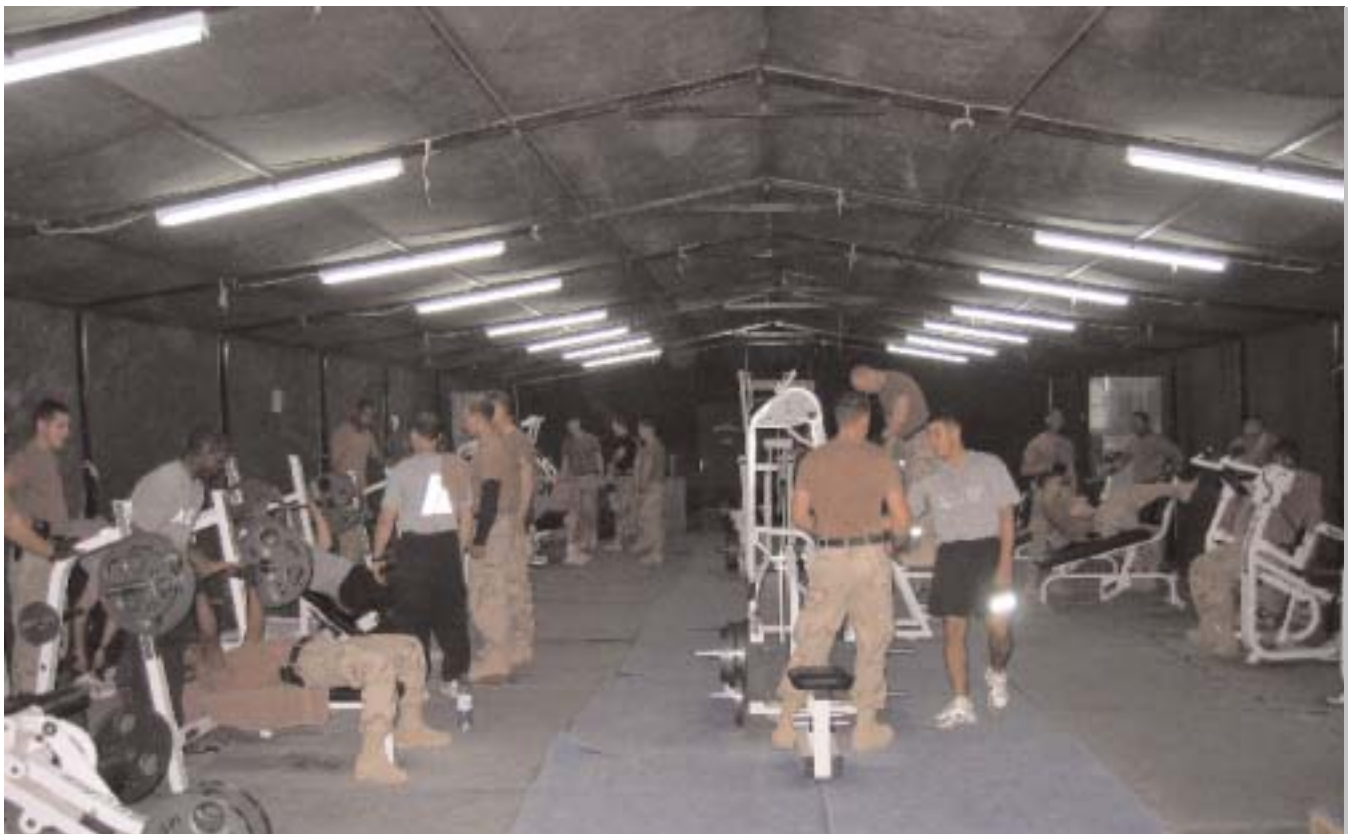


one of the most popular sites on FOB Ridgway. I am sure its popularity has nothing to do with the pastries, cheesecake and ice cream available at the dining facility. The Fun Room houses just about every type of video game imaginable. It is an extremely popular site with our young soldiers. The Ridgway Cinema houses a large screen television with Bose surround sound speakers.

Quality of life initiatives have reached an all time high here at FOB Ridgway. It has been a long time coming but we finally completed construction on the Ridgway Fitness Center, Fun Room and Cinema. Many soldiers are still transitioning from their temporary billeting to the life support area. As I walk across FOB Ridgway I am amazed at the progress that has been made. The Fitness Center has become

Once again I want to thank each of you for the support you have given the members of Task Force Pegasus. In the life of a soldier on deployment there is very little that can compare to a package, letter or e-mail from that special someone from home.

Pegasus 06





Division Support Command Task Force Provider



Colonel Glen Takemoto **Commanding Officer, DISCOM**

To our DISCOM Family,

The 21st Chemical Company has continued doing great work assisting in the elimination of enemy ammunition supply points. In fact, Army Public Affairs and FOX news conducted interviews and aired them on 16 January 2004. The PAO stories will continue to be aired across the nation to show the positive side of what we are accomplishing. The Division Commander and Sergeant Major have also visited the 21st Chem and recognized their outstanding troopers for their actions in making Iraq a more safe and secure environment.

The troopers of HHC DISCOM continue in their diverse mission of sustaining the combat missions of Task Force All-American and increasing their quality of life on FOB Ridgway. HHC DISCOM held a "down home" Christmas Dinner that fed over 70 of the company's soldiers allowing them time for fellowship and to enjoy each other's company. HHC DISCOM also continues to do great work in its sponsorship of an Iraqi secondary school of over 200 students.

The 782d MSB continues to provide outstanding support to the Division as well as taking on sev-



eral special projects critical to Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition to the daily distribution of supplies, the battalion has significantly improved force protection for the Division. They have developed and tested the modifications to each soldier's protective vest and continue applying armor plating to the vehicles carrying our sol-



diers throughout the area of operations. As part of our efforts to improve the quality of life of the Iraqi people, the 782d adopted a school in the local town of Sinn Adh Dibban. They have distributed much needed school supplies and food for the children as well as initiated work to improve the facility. The battalion's quality of life is also improving daily as their LSA now



life. The recent opening of the MWR facilities complete with weight rooms, video games, books and televisions was a big morale boost and stress release for the troopers, but plumbing in the living quarters is likely the highlight accomplishment for the month in terms of quality of life improvements...little things make a huge difference.

As always, we appreciate the hard work, love, and caring of our Family Readiness Group

has its own internet café and fitness center, providing 24-hour per day access within a minute's walk of the soldiers' quarters. Sadly, we also conducted memorial services for our fallen trooper, SSG Jeffery C. Walker.

Our 407th FSB Griffins conducted Operation Iraqi Family Community Support helping 70 people of Jebachy who were either orphaned by the war or unable to take care of themselves. Everyone received presents and a great meal. Throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Griffins continued to provide world-class support to the Falcons. Our Griffins are now redeploying and will be reunited with their families very soon.

The 82d FSB Gators continue to sustain the momentum of Task Force Panther combat operations, conduct training and improve quality of

volunteers, family, and friends supporting the DISCOM team. The postal folks recommend stopping the mailing of packages and letters to us on 20 February to ensure receipt before redeployment. We are doing well, all things considered, maintaining our mission focus (thanks to your support), staying safe, and looking forward to coming home to you in the near future. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

All the way, Airborne!

COL GLENN H. TAKEMOTO
Commanding
and
CSM KENNETH V. TAYLOR
Command Sergeant Major





82D Signal Battalion (Airborne)

LTC Crawford
Commanding Officer



Dear Families of the Commander's Voice,

Greetings and a great big Red, White and Blue "Happy Valentines Day" to the All American Signal Battalion Family. January has proven to be yet another busy month for our troopers as they continue to play an integral part in accomplishing the Division's mission here in Iraq, as guardians of freedom and our way of life.

For our families back at home what is sure to be a highlight will be the February return of twenty one Signal troopers after a one year deployment in support of Task Force Falcon. I'm very proud of you all for the outstanding communications support provided to the Second Brigade Combat Team; but I'm even more proud of the manner in which you were fully integrated into the day to day combat operations as members of the Task Force. You truly epitomized the first line of the Warrior Ethos and Soldiers Creed, "I am an American Soldier". Well done.

The strength and endurance shown by our troopers and their families remains steadfast throughout this lengthy deployment. As evidenced when Signal troopers were one again called upon by our Nation to deploy to Iraq in support of the



First Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Devil on short notice, your vigilance continues to prevail in the ever-changing nature of mission and support.

Our troopers continue to contribute in many ways to the overall mission of creating security and stability for the people of Iraq. They are not only doing this by facilitating command and control via communications support, but also by being a part of the Division team on every Forward Operating Base. From force protection to spearheading the Division's MWR Internet and phone-home initiative to the January addition of two new radio stations (Nation-wide syndicated





news, sports and music), I salute you for your continued diligence and perseverance. What an impact this has made, facilitating the ability for our soldiers to reach out and contact their loved ones.

We continue to support the Adopt a School Program with the Abdul Nassar Rachman II Secondary School for girls by visiting them frequently and coordinating contracts aimed at improving their facilities. During our next visit we will deliver school supplies and coordinate for a follow on joint school area clean up. It is encouraging to see the positive impact our efforts are making not only on the students but also on the community as a whole.

To date the daily words of encouragement received from Parents and Signal Battalion Alumni have been uplifting and serve as a constant reminder of "why we are here" and the overall importance of the mission at hand. I encourage you to continue your support and look forward to seeing you all at All American Week in May 2004.

Our Rear Detachment Team to include our Family Readiness Groups has been an absolute model of team work through some very tough times during this deployment. I cannot thank you enough for your efforts, your sacrifices and you're your continued support of this battalion. In this combat environment I realize more each day that although things have been tough, we are blessed and have much to be thankful for.

At the top of that list of blessings is the support of our families, friends and that of this "Great Nation" that we have pledged to support and defend. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to the days ahead where we can reunite the battalion.

We are now in the midst of planning for our transfer of authority with our replacement unit, while remaining focused on the safety of our paratroopers and the combat mission at hand. Our resolve and level of dedication have never been higher while keeping in mind that selfless service is paramount when your Nation calls. In closing I'd like to once again thank you all for keeping us in your thoughts and prayers and for your continued support. God bless you all, God bless this Great Nation and God Bless the Nations Guard of Honor, The All Americans.



Airborne, All the Way!

LTC Bruce T. Crawford
Commander
and
CSM Cecil W. Hammonds
Command Sergeant Major



307th Engineer Battalion (Airborne)

LTC Wehr
Commanding Officer



From the Commander and Command Sergeant Major,

With the New Year behind us, the Battalion has passed another major milestone as we transition companies between deployment and redeployment. In the next two months the Battalion Headquarters will focus on transitioning our mission here to the Marine and Navy engineer forces replacing us. Your strength, prayers, and packages brightened our holidays and we'll appreciate your continued support as we transition. As of now, the majority of B Company will be home and enjoying some well-deserved quality time off, while the lead elements of A Company will have arrived as part of the force designated to secure key facilities during the largest movement of U.S. forces since World War Two. As always, your paratroopers are playing a critical role in the nation's defense.

Please enjoy what the company commanders have prepared for their updates. As you can see we continue to accomplish our mission to provide engineer support across the largest area of operations in Iraq, while upholding the legacy of those who have gone before us. From the battalion command team, we appreciate all the hard work your paratroopers are doing here and the outstanding support they are getting from home.

HHC/ 307th EN BN

The Meuse Stick paratroopers have kept busy with missions throughout the Division sector. Our Assault & Barrier Platoon is still hard at work at Champion Base conducting Force Protection and Quality Of Life construction missions. They work side-by-side with many soldiers attached to HHC from Reserve and National Guard units to include the 957th Multi-Role Bridge Company from North Dakota (Pirates of the Euphrates), and the 122d Engineer Battalion from South Carolina. Members of A&B are also tasked out to A/27th EN BN as part of Team Pathfinder. They are conducting route clearance missions using state-of-the-art mine/Improvised Explosive Device (IED) clearing equipment in an attempt to facilitate safe travel for coalition forces along Division routes.

The Maintenance Platoon is still spread out all over western Iraq. Despite the distance separating sections, the Maintenance Platoon's leadership has convoyed throughout the Al Anbar province to visit troopers. The platoon's primary focus over the last couple of weeks has been reinforcing HMMWV bodies with steel panels to provide blast



protection for soldiers while they are out on the Iraqi roads. The platoon has also begun redeployment preparations by servicing company vehicles to prepare them for the long trip back to the port.

The S4 shop led by SSG Aguirre and SGT Brown has been busy with a multitude of projects. PFC Bobb and SPC Armstrong have constructed a myriad of items, such as ladders, desks, file cabinets and bunk beds to improve the quality of life for soldiers. In addition, the S4 shop has developed a robust class IV yard that provides materials to the entire Division. The S1 section, led by SFC Williams



and SSG Smith, is busy ensuring all PAC operations, to include the processing of over 500 awards, are completed prior to redeployment. SSG Smith has been working late hours making sure that none of the 1500 soldiers that are assigned to the 307th Engineer Battalion have unresolved personnel or administrative actions.

The Commo section is busy supporting all computer and

communication needs for engineers at both the DMAIN and DREAR headquarters. Most recently CPL Sturm at the DREAR, and PFC Reed at the DMAIN, led the teams that set up and run the internet cafés. These cafes are comprised of 20 laptop computers as part of an MWR program to provide internet access to the soldiers at both base camps. The S2 and S3 shops are hard at work in the Division Headquarters running the 307th Engineer Battalion TOC that manages and tracks all the engineer assets for the 82d Airborne Division.



As we start preparing to redeploy, we continue to appreciate the daily sacrifices that our families and friends make at home to support us. We continue to keep each of you in our thoughts and we continue to pray for the recovery of our wounded and injured soldiers who have returned to the States. We look forward to seeing everyone again. Airborne! All the Way!

A CO/ 307th EN BN

January was spent deploying three squads to Iraq as well as training the rest of the company to operate as infantry for the upcoming deployment.

One squad from each platoon was selected to provide engineer support to their habitual task force. 1st Platoon sent their 1st squad (SSG Rosales, SPC Watts, SGT Arguello, SGT Watson, PVT Medford, CPL Villanueva, PFC Giroux, and PFC Saucedo) to support 2-505 PIR. They are supporting operations around V Corps Headquarters. LTC Wehr caught up with 1st squad during a visit to their location and got a picture to show they are doing well. 1st

Squad, 2nd Platoon (SGT Lindsey, SPC Shaffer, SGT McBean, SGT Hill, PFC Knight, PFC Niemeyer, PVT Oherron, and SPC Batts) are supporting 2-504 PIR. They are supporting operations in Baghdad with the 1st Armored Division. 2nd Squad, 3rd Platoon (SSG Gaw, PFC Ralston, SGT Titsworth, CPL Brunelli, PFC Griffin, PFC Woods, PVT Taylor, and PV2 Gonzales) is supporting 3-504 PIR near Balad.

Here at Fort Bragg, the company has been training for operations in Iraq. The first portion of the company's training has been geared towards building the proficiency of each sapper in the company. We have trained on radio and communications procedures, conducted NBC training to include going through an NBC chamber, conducted a driver's training course to license operators on both the HMMWV and LMTV, as well as conducted basic and advanced land navigation training both at the Pre-Ranger Course and in the Northern Training Area. The squads have also received extensive training on MOUT operations. Instructors from both the Pre-Ranger Course and the Special Warfare Training Center have taught our sappers how to fight and operate in an urban environment. Squads have improved their skills immensely by conducting both day and night training at the MOUT Site Complex on Holland DZ.

The training will become more intense in February. The company will conduct a range week to develop weapons skills and then move into squad and platoon training which will culminate with a squad live fire exercise. The training has been both realistic and strenuous, and will prepare the company for the challenges ahead. The Paraglide has recognized the training Alpha Company is doing and will be publishing an article shortly.



B CO/ 307th EN BN

While most of us have made it home, the info below is for the history books. On 15 JAN, 1st Platoon Headquarters and 1st squad executed Transfer of Authority (TOA) with elements from the 70th Engineer Battalion. 1st Platoon continued to execute missions, and led the school refurbishment for nearly one fifth of Baghdad, until the TOA date. The platoon should leave Iraq on 17 JAN and reunite with family and friends around midday on 18 JAN.



Upon return the platoon will conduct a one-week reintegration-training (half day) schedule followed by 30 days of leave, beginning on 7 FEB.

2nd Platoon moved into the newly built barracks here on FALCON FOB the day after Christmas, despite having less than a month before redeployment. 2nd Platoon's focus has not changed. They are still mission oriented, executing Force Protection missions around key sites (banks, government buildings, and Falcon FOB). In addition they built a tire wall and weapons zeroing range at the Falcon FOB, which allows all units on the FOB to have a first class range within walking distance. This range is also used to train the new Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, which has their academy on Falcon FOB. Everything is now set for redeployment. All bags are packed, customs completed, and they are waiting for their flight in the next week. Twelve soldiers, led by SSG Carabello, will convoy to Kuwait and clean up the vehicles to load them on the boat. These twelve soldiers will redeploy from Kuwait in the 3-7 FEB timeframe.

3rd Platoon remained busy this past month conducting Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) destruction operations in an area to the south of our FOB, known as the "boneyard" where all the war hulks from Baghdad are stored. The call came in a few days prior to TOA that there was a tremendous amount of UXO and large quantity of tank rounds that threatened coalition forces operating in this area. 3rd

Platoon responded and reduced the UXOs. In addition, they have taken point for Task Force 3-325 to upgrade traffic-ability in and around all the gas stations in their area. This project produced tremendous results since gas remains a commodity that is in short supply in Baghdad. 3rd Platoon will leave Falcon FOB on 18 JAN and will redeploy about four days later. SSG Hunter and SGT Seppenan will lead nine soldiers conveying down to Kuwait. They will redeploy with the rest of the Beast and fly in the 3-7 FEB timeframe.

HQ/B/307 has continued to monitor all engineer work on Falcon FOB. SSG Atkinson and his 618th Nasty section, the fab five (SPC Lane, SPC Atencio, SPC Gellen, SPC Reichert), continued to use two civilian dump trucks, one bucket loader, one bull dozer, and one compactor to work wonders. Nasty improved 400 meters of road, and moved over 400 loads of dirt and rubble while improving the Falcon FOB.

The Nasty also assisted with Force Protection around the camp by installing barriers to shield the Dining Facility. The company conducted a Video Teleconference on 3 JAN during the visit of LTC Wehr and CSM Stegich, and it was great to see all the loved ones that our soldiers will soon return to. In addition, we also promoted MSG Reynolds and SGT Cudd; reenlisted SSG Hunter and SPC Atencio; presented 4 Purple Hearts (SGT Naing, SPC Marden, PFC Goddard, SPC Duzan); awarded Army Commendation Medals to SGT Seppenan, SPC Cervay, SGT Haines, PFC Williams; and awarded Falcon Brigade Coins to SGT Talbott, SPC Ortega, PFC Goddard, PFC Bertaux. We are packed and ready to go for redeployment between 18 JAN



and 7 FEB. Block leave will be 13 FEB through 14 MAR, with the exception of 1st platoon, which will take leave a week early starting on 7 FEB.

C CO/ 307th EN BN



The Charlie Company "Warriors" continue to exhibit nothing short of stellar support to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team (3 BCT). We are now past the halfway point of our mission, and just like any run to the finish, your Sappers are charging hard to finish strong in our remaining time here. Beyond our ongoing efforts to capture weapons dealers, confiscate enemy munitions, and facilitate community assistance programs, there still exists the macro effort of establishing governing bodies and training a security force so that Iraq can be returned to the Iraqis. Each respective platoon conducts daily interaction in some form or another with local community leadership in an effort to improve police security, economic welfare, and facilitate local governances. In addition to the combat operations and continual support, we also have initiated planning for our return to the All American city...AIRBORNE! Our upcoming redeployment, and the continued support of family and friends, are the two most significant factors that motivate the troopers' positive outlook and perseverance through the daily challengers here. Again, we are all thankful for the critical support that you provide from the home front.

618th LE CO

Since the last update, the Nasty has continued working hard to maintain its reputation as the Army's airfield repair experts. 2nd Platoon is now on the last phase of the airfield repair project. They have repaired over 35 craters, creating two active runways capable of receiving C130/C17/C5 aircraft. This last phase of repair will create an additional operational taxiway. After this phase, the platoon will emplace a runway lighting system and mark the runways for incoming aircraft so they can conduct 24-hour flight operations. The maintenance platoon has also done an excellent job repairing and maintaining the entire company's equipment.

We also said farewell to SSG Atkinson's squad as they completed a full year tour in Iraq supporting B/307th and

the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT). When we visited them at FOB Falcon, they were preparing all their equipment for the trip home. They were all looking forward to being reunited with their loved ones. I would like to say thank you to that squad for job well done, and their selfless service in volunteering to stay with Bravo Company. 3rd Platoon has been doing less route clearance and more construction in support of Charlie Company and 3rd Brigade over the past month. They have been supervising the construction of living facilities and road networks for a nearby Ammunition Supply Point (ASP). They also built a weapons range complex for the Brigade. They stop by FOB RIDGWAY frequently to collect maintenance parts and various supplies to support their operations, and to stay in touch with other members of the Nasty.



This month we sent five soldiers to the promotion board. Congratulations to SGT Richard Brooks, SGT Sean Foley, SGT Mark McNair, SGT Ramon Melendez, and SPC David Allen for passing the board. Sapper Village has seen recent Quality Of Life improvements. We now have a functioning computer and phone center for everyone in



Sapper Village, open any time of the day. There are 6 phones and 19 computer stations with full internet access and web-cams for soldiers to stay in touch with their family and friends. Finally, we would like to thank the FRG, families, and friends that sent care packages and letters during the holiday season. It had a significant impact on the morale of the company. All the way!

Alpha Company, 27th Engineer Battalion

The Sappers and Vertical Construction soldiers of Alpha Company want to wish everyone a Happy New Year! This past month has seen much activity from the entire company. With only a couple of months remaining, each and every soldier is working hard in preparation for redeployment. In the meantime, we are keeping safe and continu-



ing our contributions to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

1st Platoon continues to support the 82nd Airborne Division and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel with the safe removal and destruction of Iraqi ordnance and ammunition. They continue to work in separate loca-



tions, with each enjoying spacious accommodations that contribute to the soldiers' morale and welfare. In addition, LT Brennan is now the acting commander of a reserve engineer company (A/489th EN BN) while their commander is on leave!



During the past month, 2nd Platoon conducted intense training on new equipment, and has recently initiated missions to make the Iraqi roads and highways safe for everyone. Combined with soldiers from A&B Platoon of HHC 307th Engineer Battalion, and a platoon of reserve engineers from A/489th, 2nd Platoon has been safely executing its mission. SSG Reed and CPL(P) Huston want to send all their love to their newborn babies!

Vertical Platoon's construction efforts have been phenomenal. Their attention to detail has continued to improve the Quality Of Life for all soldiers throughout the area. They have truly made a name for themselves by building high-quality structures for all to enjoy. After five months of steady work, there seems to be no shortage of work for the carpenters, electricians, and plumbers. SPCs Mendoza, Moore, and Rollman have been doing an incredible job, and they miss their families immensely.

Every passing day brings each 27th Engineer Battalion soldier closer to home. We appreciate the support and sacrifices of each family member, and look forward to our imminent return to Fort Bragg and our loved ones!

All The Way!
LTC Wehr
and
CSM Stegich



82D Soldier Support Battalion (Airborne)

LTC Ryan
Commanding Officer



Dear Family and Friends,

By the time this month's FRG newsletter hits the street, you will have already joined CPT Heckel, SSG(P) Pennington and the heroes of C FAST for a well deserved homecoming. Words are inadequate to describe their sacrifice, and their contributions to 2 BCT paratroopers and to our nation's progress in the Global War on Terrorism. Their efforts, along with those who served in OEF before them, set the benchmark for excellence that the troopers from HHC, B FAST, D FAST and the 316th Postal Company continue to sustain. So, from those of us still fighting the good fight, welcome home and thanks for paving the way - we'll see you on the high ground.



sion success has been both impressive and significant.



Sometimes the past provides the best vantage point from which to appreciate all that has been achieved. In considering the conditions of our Forward Operation Bases and the state of the local community from when we first arrived, they seem in stark contrast to the environments we live in today. While each base has a distinct personality, they were all empty shells just a few months ago; however now, they are fully functioning communities with a host of services from commercial vendors to contracted laundry to internet cafes. Although these services contribute to a stronger local economy and better relations with the Iraqi people, we are mindful that these conveniences are secondary to the safety and security of our forces. In that vain, the most tangible improvement has been to our force protection posture at each operating base. In both structural enhancements and training, keeping the force safe while accomplishing our support mission remains our primary focus, and the progress in both force protection and mis-

In every area, our major improvements can be traced to the discipline, insight, and idealism of our soldiers. Our NCO leaders have contributed to well-integrated force protection plans. Our finance teams have distributed almost \$40 million to help secure our bases, improve quality of life and stabilize the economy. The personnelists can now perform virtually every management function available at Ft. Bragg, over the internet, in real time. And the 316th Postal Company worked 20 hours a day over the Christmas holidays and have processed over 4 million lbs. of mail in support of task force soldiers. In addition, virtually every 82d SSB trooper has completed drivers training and last week 20 HHC/D FAST troopers graduated from the Combat Life Savers Course. As the list of accomplishments continues to mount, the most notable growth has occurred in the con-





viction and professionalism of our SSB paratroopers. To think that a few years ago some parents silently hoped that the Army might provide their son or daughter with a little "direction" - and today, these very same sons and daughters are charting a course for the security of our nation and for the freedom for Iraq.

Their growth has not gone unnoticed as this month several SSB paratroopers were recognized for their patriotism, valor, fidelity and potential for increased responsibility with the follow advancements and promotions: To Staff

Sergeant: Elise McClain, Timothy McGreal, and Sherie Rivers; to Sergeant: Adeo Ayegbaraju, Daniel Cardenas, Delvon Cottrell, Jason Crawford, Elliot Diaz, Nichole Drew, Carl Dye, Bryan Ortega, Mario Palacios, Joseph Singer, and Raphael Torres; to Specialist: Roel Alaniz, Nathaniel Booker, Bill Foster, Julie Harris, Vincenzo Lamontagna, Maria, Martinez, and Danyel Viti; to Private First Class: Alexis Perez. Congratulations to you all for your past contributions and Godspeed for you bright futures.

As a reminder, you have until February 20, 2004 to mail packages and letters into theater. Items mailed before February 20 should reach their intended destination. However, in the ensuing months, SSB troopers will be dispersed to departure airfields and command and control centers to help facilitate the redeployment process. As a result, mail may not catch up with your loved one until they return to Ft. Bragg.

Thank you for your continued prayers and patriotism. We do what we do for you, and we couldn't do it without you.

All the Way - Airborne!
LTC Tim Ryan and CSM Marion White





313th Military Intelligence Battalion (Airborne)

LTC Guarino
Commanding Officer



Families of the 313th Military Intelligence Battalion,

We have started off the New Year with a sense of enthusiasm as we draw closer to the end of our mission in Iraq. We will stay focused on the mission at hand, but also enthusiastically look forward to what the future will bring. As many of you already know, 1SG Wagner has stepped up and is now the acting Command Sergeant Major for the troopers deployed forward. He and I traveled to Baghdad in early January to spend some time with Bravo Company before they left. Our message to them, and now to you, is to make a dedicated effort to take care of one another as they reintegrate back into Fort Bragg life. Additionally, you should be extremely proud of who



chop was involved) on the part of Apache 6, they are all doing great and ready to get going with the mission. All joking aside, the latest report is that CPT Strider is fine and will return to his company shortly. There were many new faces in the crowd for me, as Alpha Company was still on block leave from their redeployment from Afghanistan as we deployed to Iraq. It was encouraging to meet them and see them approach this newest challenge with a positive outlook.



they are and what they have accomplished. We saw Bravo Company again when they brought a few vehicles to the newly deployed Alpha Company. It was an interesting contrast to see the Alpha Company troopers just off the plane and eager to get after the mission at hand in comparison to the seasoned veterans of Bravo Company with mile-wide smiles on their faces as they are ready to return home. By the time you read this, Bravo Company should be redeployed to Fort Bragg and back with their family and friends.

Alpha Company is getting settled in, and with the exception of an eating malfunction (I believe a pork

Upon visiting with Alpha Company, I reflected back on the early days of the deployment and realized that we have much to be thankful for - our living conditions are significantly improved. The large majority of us live in buildings and no longer in tents, get regular hot showers, have great mess halls, get mail on a regular basis, have access to phones, internet, AAFES PX, gyms, and television. Also, we had the All American Chorus come through. Seems like I



have seen them perform a hundred times, but they never cease to motivate and inspire. Even though living conditions are getting pretty good, we are still envious of Bravo Company as we are all looking forward to getting back home to our families. We are also very thankful for and appreciate everything our families have done to support us while we are away from home.



The remainder of Echo Company has also safely completed its deployment to Iraq. After two years of piecemeal deployments, they are finally all back together, and the results show. They just finished another extended mission in the Western Desert and continue to execute extremely impressive missions. Charlie Company continues to work hard in support of the Panthers. The operational tempo they have maintained is truly phenomenal. They have conducted multiple operations to support the seizure of IED-making materials, automatic weapons, explosives, artillery rounds, and the capture of several key anti-coalition members. Due in large part to incredible individual efforts by every soldier, the Company is performing extremely well. Likewise, Delta and Headquarters Companies continue to do some heavy lifting for the Battalion and the Division. The



Headquarters' mechanics have been out on contact missions ensuring that Bravo Company was prepared for its convoy south and that the rest of the Battalion is in good shape when they will do the same. This group of troopers is working very hard, and I have



the utmost confidence that all of our vehicles and equipment will work when we need them.

Finally, the lead elements of the I Marine Expeditionary Force have started to flow in and we are beginning to work the mechanics of our transition with them. As we draw towards the end of our deployment, we will remain focused on accomplishing our mission and setting the Marines up for success. I remain extremely proud of everyone's hard work and selfless service. It is a privilege to be on a team with such talented and dedicated troopers. Thanks for all of your support and encouragement from back home.



All the way,
LTC Guarino



3-4 Air Defense Artillery Regiment (Airborne)

LTC King
Commanding Officer



Dear Families of the Skystrikers,

Greetings from Iraq. As all of us begin to settle into the New Year and press toward the foreseeable end to a long deployment I want to say thanks for your continued support to the Skystrikers. Your response to Operation Santa Claus was a huge success and not only Skystrikers benefited from your gifts and packages but many troopers within Task Force 82. Hundreds of packages were received from addresses throughout the United States.

The Skystrikers continue to conduct operations throughout Iraq promoting peace and security for the people of Iraq. Know that the people of Iraq are safer and more secure than they have ever been and many continue to welcome our presence in Iraq. Yes there are a few that would never welcome a peaceful Iraq but their days are numbered as we continue to defeat former regime elements. Skystrikers remains deployed throughout Iraq, C battery continues to provide exceptional support

to 3rd Brigade; D Battery and HHB continues to provide security for Forward Operating Base Ridgway; B Battery (Bulls) are redeploying, as I type, with 2nd Brigade Combat Team. The Bulls spearheaded the deployment being deployed 12



months while maintaining their high standards and professionalism. All of us commend their service to this country and the Division and I ask that you personally share your gratitude to our nation's heroes. Family members please take advantage of the reintegration training and all of the resources the Army provides as you get





groups. This is the link that will allow you to share your feeling with family members that share some of the same anxiety as you anticipate the return of your spouse. I'm sure many of you took a break from the monthly family readiness group meetings over the holidays but now is the time to become reenergized, since much of the information on redeployment will be disseminated through family readiness group leaders.

reacquainted and strengthen all of your relationships. Thank you again for your patience, perseverance, prayers and support during a very tough deployment.

As the month of February begins I know for many you are becoming anxious about the return of your loved ones and knowing the exact date of their return. As we get closer to redeployment you will be able to find out information from the rear detachment commanders. Additionally it is extremely important that you are integrated and available to your family readiness

In the next newsletter I will attempt to provide redeployment dates but the best source of this information will be the rear detachment commander as dates and times may change due to a myriad of reasons. Thanks again for all that you are doing and the Skystrikers remain focused on our mission in large part because of your efforts and support at home. Happy Valentines day to all and the Skystrikers send a request for all of the Skystriker families on Valentine's Day, "Will you be mine?" Proudly serving God and Country.



Airborne All the Way...By Daring Deeds!!

LTC Tomi D. King
Skystriker 6





HHC
82D Airborne Division
Commander: CPT Trehan

Dear Families of HHC 82D Airborne Division,

Hello from the Troopers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 82d Airborne Division deployed in Iraq. Your Troopers continue to make tremendous contributions to defeating the enemies of peace and to rebuilding Iraq. Each and everyone of you should take pride in the fact that the sacrifice you and your Troopers are making will go a long way towards building a safe and secure country and a more peaceful world.

The Troopers of HHC, 82d Airborne Division play a significant role in every aspect of the Divisions operations. From moving mail and supplies to forward units, to assisting with media coverage throughout the Division area of operations, to providing timely intelligence to the maneuver brigades, a Trooper from HHC is always involved.

Of note this month the Division Surgeon's Office

headed up the opening of a rehabilitated dental clinic in downtown Ar Ramadi. The Division Surgeon Section, as the Division's lead for medical civil military operations, has identified over 600 individual medical projects, at an estimated cost of over \$12.2 million that will vastly improve the medical infrastructure of the Al Anbar and northern Babil provinces. They also developed a "mobile clinic" concept...a health clinic on wheels, which will travel throughout the provinces.

The maintenance section from Logistic Support Activity completed technical inspections on over 40 vehicles within the headquarters. The technical inspections were designed to identify problems that might prevent the vehicle from making the over 600-mile journey back to Kuwait during redeployment operations. The dining facility section completed over 20 convoys to move Troopers, mail, repair parts and supplies to local forward operating bases.

As part of an effort to increase physical fitness and improve the warrior spirit, MAJ Young (from the Division Chemical Section) began a combatives class at Champion Main. The class meets twice a week and focuses on basic grappling.





Some truly significant events took place this month in the lives of our Troopers. SSG Robert Edwards from the Division Fire Support Element, reenlisted for six years and for stabilization at Fort Bragg. SGT Daniel Clifton (Command Group) will be promoted to Staff Sergeant, SGT Jacqueline Murray-Bonno (Staff Judge Advocate) will be promoted to Staff Sergeant and SPC Brandon Korn (G1) will be promoted to Sergeant. The following Troopers celebrated birthdays in January while contributing to the Global War on Terrorism: LTC Steven Grove (G2), MAJ Michelle Brendenkamp (G2), MSG Gary Belush, SFC David Inglis (SJA), SGT Jacqueline Murray-Bonno (SJA), SGT Harliss White and SPC Johnathan Cox (LSA).

Thank you all for your continued support. Your emails, letters and prayers make us stronger. Together we are all making the world a safe place. Look forward to seeing you all soon. God Bless.

All the Way!
CPT Trehan





**82D Military Police
Company (Airborne)
Commander: CPT Hill**

Dear Families of the 82D MP Company,

We are one more month closer to returning to see our loved ones back home at Fort Bragg. The soldiers continue to be motivated. With all the tasks they complete everyday, the newest assigned task seems to be the one they enjoy the most. Prepare for redeployment. The paratroopers in the unit add this task to their plate without hesitation. Although the thought of going home is nice, the unit continues to drive forward with their daily missions. The paratroopers continue to be as professional as they were the day they walked into Iraq. Even though the unit will be leaving soon, the troopers still believe in their mission and would gladly continue it if called upon.

4th Platoon and the HQ Platoon continue to provide outstanding military police support to Champion Main. 4th Platoon has completed another 40 convoy/combat escort missions. They also provide 24/7 security to the DMAIN, which by far has been the standard for AO Topeka. PSD has continued to do a great job securing the Division Commander and other dignitaries that visit Iraq. The success of 4th Platoon would not be possible if it were not for the tireless efforts of the paratroopers in the HQ platoon. SGT "J" and the mechanics not only keep our trucks running but have conducted services and technical inspection in preparation for redeployment. CPL Parenti, SPC Castro, and SGT Campbell keep the company's operations cell running seamlessly. Not only do they run the operations cell, but they continue to support the unit in their specific



fields of communication, personnel administration and medical support.

3rd Platoon is doing a great job supporting the 3rd Brigade Combat Team. SSG Arnold continues to lead by example pushing the troopers even closer to redeployment. SGT Chavez, SGT Figueroa and SGT Hackett are taking great care of the soldiers



while always keeping mission accomplishment the top priority. PFC Burks does an outstanding job keeping their trucks up and running and PFC Burgos provide excellent medical coverage. Hopefully, 3rd Platoon will join the company upon redeployment.

After a long year, 2nd Platoon will redeploy back to Fort Bragg. The troopers look forward to their return, a well deserved break is in order. 2nd Platoon set the standard for the division as they supported 1AD. Leaders like SSG Lockhart and SGT Martinez did a great job taking care of their troopers. SPC Johnson, SPC Davidson, and PFC Gotshell performed outstandingly supporting the platoon.

Overall, what a great month the company had. We promoted CPL Blackwell to SGT, SPC Leaders to SGT, PFC Ransick to SPC, SGT Palmer to SSG and laterally appointed SPC Orozco to CPL. The deployed soldiers would also like to congratulate SPC Luongo on the birth of her son, and welcome back SFC Stewart from ANCOG. We all look forward to coming home soon.

The paratroopers of the 82d Military Police Company would again like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year.

ALL THE WAY! AIRBORNE! CPT Hill

PARATROOPERS IN ACTION!



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN IRAQ!

